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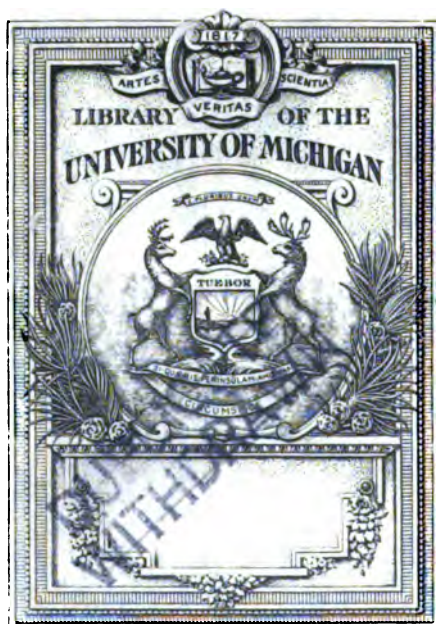
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MARK TWAIN

themselves that we couldn't make out what the matter was. However, we plunged into the wood, they scurrying in the lead, and the trouble was quickly revealed: they had hanged a little fellow with a bark rope, and he was kicking and struggling, in the process of choking to death. We rescued him, and fetched him around. It was some more human nature; the admiring little folk imitating their elders; they were playing mob, and had achieved a success which promised to be a good deal more serious than they had bargained for.

It was not a dull excursion for me. I managed to put in the time very well. I made various acquaintanceships, and in my quality of stranger was able to ask as many questions as I wanted to. A thing which naturally interested me, as a statesman, was the matter of wages. I picked up what I could under that head during the afternoon. A man who hasn't had much experience, and doesn't think, is apt to measure a nation's prosperity or lack of prosperity by the mere size of the prevailing wages; if the wages be high, the nation is prosperous; if low, it isn't. Which is an error. It isn't what sum you get, it's how much you can buy with it, that's the important thing; and it's that that tells whether your wages are high in fact or only high in name. I could remember how it was in the time of our great civil war in the nineteenth century. In the North a carpenter got three dollars a day, gold valuation; in the South he got fifty—payable in Confederate shinplasters worth a dollar a bushel. In the North a suit of overalls cost three dollars—a day's wages; in the South it cost

A CONNECTICUT YANKEE

seventy-five—which was two days' wages. Other things were in proportion. Consequently, wages were twice as high in the North as they were in the South, because the one wage had that much more purchasing power than the other had.

Yes, I made various acquaintances in the hamlet, and a thing that gratified me a good deal was to find our new coins in circulation—lots of milrays, lots of mills, lots of cents, a good many nickels, and some silver; all this among the artisans and commonalty generally; yes, and even some gold—but that was at the bank, that is to say, the goldsmith's. I dropped in there while Marco, the son of Marco, was haggling with a shopkeeper over a quarter of a pound of salt, and asked for change for a twenty-dollar gold piece. They furnished it—that is, after they had chewed the piece, and rung it on the counter, and tried acid on it, and asked me where I got it, and who I was, and where I was from, and where I was going to, and when I expected to get there, and perhaps a couple of hundred more questions; and when they got aground, I went right on and furnished them a lot of information voluntarily; told them I owned a dog, and his name was Watch, and my first wife was a Free Will Baptist, and her grandfather was a Prohibitionist, and I used to know a man who had two thumbs on each hand and a wart on the inside of his upper lip, and died in the hope of a glorious resurrection, and so on, and so on, and so on, till even that hungry village questioner began to look satisfied, and also a shade put out; but he had to respect a man of my financial strength, and so he didn't give me any

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Clarence's editorial reference to this affair was to this effect:

threw. It will be observed, by a glance at our
work maintained advertising columns, that the commu-
there since, soon nity is to be favored with a treat of un-
hastic have wity usual interest in the tournament line.
oked interest The names of the artists are warrant of
upon the easo good entertainment. The box-office
ve been m d will be open at noon of the 13th; ad-
by the an us, mission 3 cents, reserved seats 5; pro-
ent out ch y by ceeds to go to the hospital fund. The
sterian B n, and royal pair and all the Court will be pres-
e some y ng men ent. With these exceptions, and the
of our under the press and the clergy, the free list is strict-
l guidance of the ly sus tended. Parties are hereby warn-
w aid in a known ed against buying tickets of speculators;
a great enterprise they will not be good at the door.
o: making pure; Everybody knows and likes The Boss,
esent; everybody knows and likes Sir Sag.;
movement had its come, let us give the lads a good send-
o: origin in preven off. ReMember, the proceeds go to a
has ever been a great and free charity, and one whose
sions id our broad begevotence stretches out its help-
on the p us ing hand, warm with the blood of a lov-
other one ing heart, to all that suffer, regardless of
ospel, race, creed, condition or color—the
by only charity yet established in the earth
e which has no politico-religious stop-
The cock on its compassion, but says Here
the same flows the stream, let all come and
to represent drink! Turn out, all hands! fetch along
ized thirty of your doughnuts and your gum-drops
needs and hear and have a good time. Pie for sale on
which years age! the ground, and rocks to crack it with;
design was organ also circus-lemonade—three drops of
ing, the missions, lime juice to a barrel of water.
so that both had N. B. *This is the first tournament*
to withdraw' and under the new law, which allow each
much to their combatant to use any weapon he sees fit;
grief, fer. You want to make a note of this

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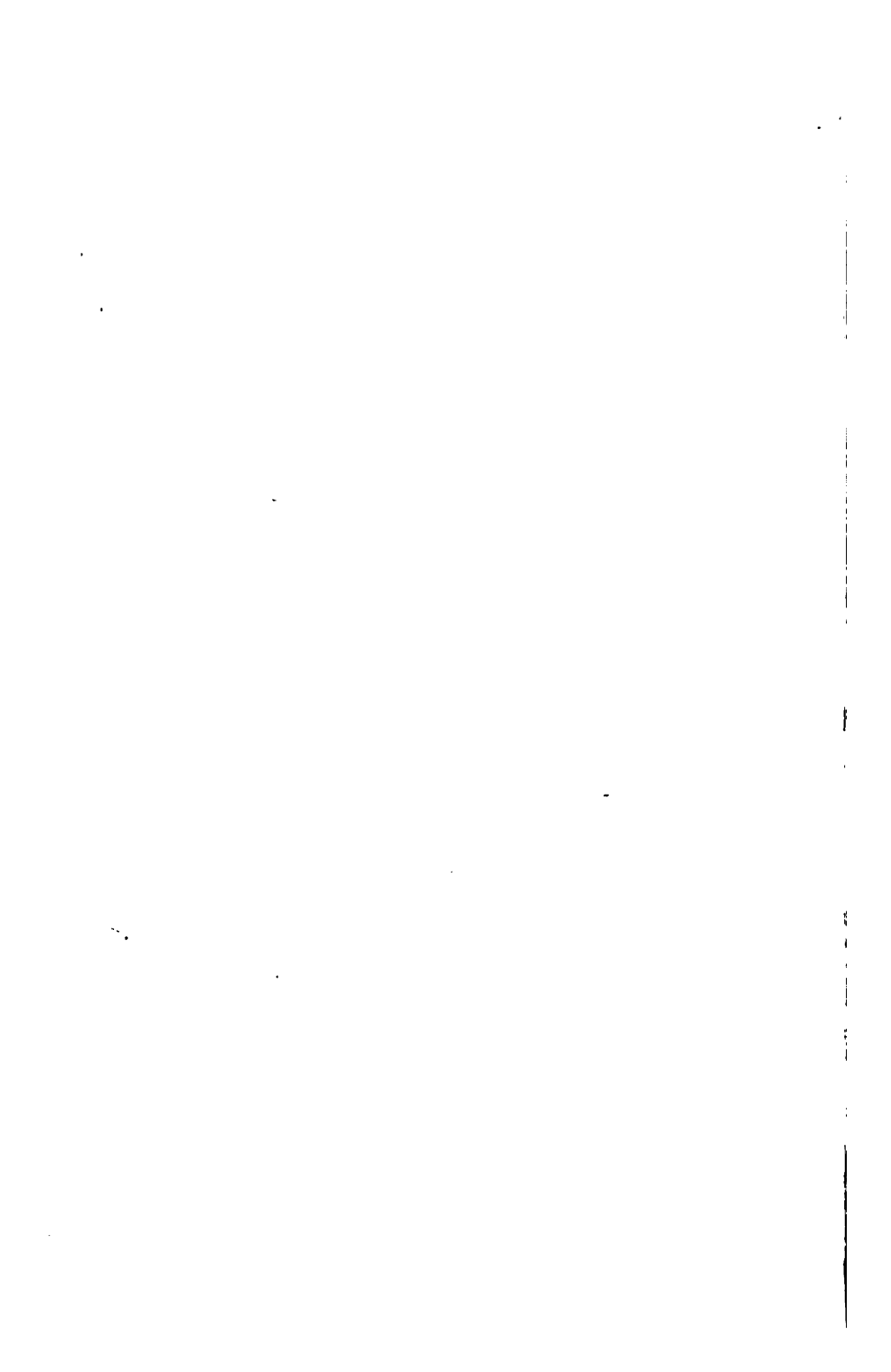
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then for a time he lay silent, and apparently sinking away toward death. Presently his fingers began to pick busily at the coverlet, and by that sign I knew that his end was at hand. With the first suggestion of the death-rattle in his throat he started up slightly, and seemed to listen: then he said:

"A bugle? . . . It is the king! The drawbridge, there! Man the battlements!—turn out the—"

He was getting up his last "effect"; but he never finished it.

THE END



BOOK

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